



COMMISSION ON
ASIAN PACIFIC
AMERICAN AFFAIRS

CAPAA

Improving the lives of Asian Pacific Americans

October 2005-December 2005

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear API Community Members and Friends,

Welcome to CAPAA's first newsletter for 2005. This edition focuses on a very important concern for the Asian Pacific Islander Community and other non-native English speaking Communities: Immigrant education and the challenges of WASL.

While it is true that this year's scores on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) showed gains in nearly every grade and subject, good enough to boost spirits of the exam's supporters, but not enough to ease concern about what will happen in 2008, when the test becomes a graduation requirement.

Our education reform law, as is currently implemented, does not work for recent immigrant students dominant in languages other than English. Beginning with the class of 2008, students need to pass the WASL in reading, writing, and math in order to graduate from High School in Washington State (earn certificate of academic achievement).

Students who emigrate here from non-English speaking countries do not always have adequate time to learn English to the degree necessary to pass WASL. Currently, the only option

often is for those students to re-take 12th grade over and over again. The reality is, most of our students will drop out rather than retake 12th grade repeatedly. This is the problem we are trying to solve!

Let us make education reform work for all students! The Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs has made WASL one of the most urgent priorities to make education work especially for recent immigrant students dominant in languages other than English!

Let us raise public awareness and educate our community and legislators for legislative session 2006. Let us work with State Representative Dave Upthegrove, Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos and Rep. Phyllis Kenney who are our champions in the state legislature.

We must work with more zeal, and more conscious involvement of making right this deeply embedded problem that face our high school graduates of 2008. CAPAA's three major programs for this biennium year are economic development, healthcare and education. Please watch out for our next steps in the coming months!

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Abellera

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

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Chair's Message

The Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs is, by law, charged with advising the Legislature, state agencies, and the Governor about issues and policies that impact the Asian Pacific Islander community. I am pleased to report that we began 2005 very active and productive in our charge.

Through excellent legislative work by Ellen Abellera, Alan Vu, and API Community leaders, the legislature made many improvements to the Linked Deposit Program. This will continue to help minority-owned small businesses. More information on the program and its improvements are listed below.

CAPAA's current project is examining racism and race issues in higher education. Many of you are aware of allegations of racial harassment at Washington State University. CAPAA was not involved with a report issued by the Human Rights Commission Task Force, and has not adopted it.

Instead, CAPAA will independently review community concerns and issues and proceed with our own proposals. CAPAA needs to hear from the community; if you have any comments or ideas on how you would like CAPAA to proceed, please call me at 253-887-8686.

Our organization has changed now that we have specific committees in which community members can participate. This is our way to ensure greater API involvement in communicating with CAPAA and directing concerns and issues to the legislature, government agencies, and the Governor. The committees are Civil Rights, Education, Economic Development, and Health/Human Services. Please contact me if you are interested in serving on a CAPAA committee. And please join us at our Commission meetings (see website for schedule).



Yvonne Kinoshita Ward
CAPAA Board Chair

LINKED DEPOSIT PROGRAM

Background

The Washington State Legislature found that minority and women owned businesses had been historically denied access to capital and that lack of capital is a key barrier to the development of minority and women owned businesses. In response, the legislature passed the 1993 Minority and Women Owned Business Assistance Act, which created the Linked Deposit Program ("LDP").

Terms

- Businesses participating in the LDP must be certified by OMWBE
- Businesses must satisfy their Bank's lending criteria
- Qualifying loans must include:
 - Lines of credit
 - Financing of accounts receivable
 - Working capital
 - Equipment purchases
 - Real property acquisition
- \$1 million per-loan maximum; no limit on the number of loans a firm may have
- Interest rate: up to 2% below market rate
 - If the effective return on the timed CD is less than 2%, the interest rate reduction passed onto the firm can be reduced by an equivalent percentage.
- Loan term: Up to 10 years

- Participants decertified by OMWBE will have their loans removed from the program, at which time they will lose the interest rate reduction

2005 Legislative Key Changes:

- Increase size of program from \$50 Million to \$100 Million
- Establishes Per Loan Maximum Amount of \$1 Million
- Removes Sunset Provision
- Allows banks to reduce the interested rate reduction passed on to firms if the effective rate of return on the CD is less than 2%
- Transfers program reporting responsibilities from CTED to OMWBE.

All other elements of the Linked Deposit Program have remained unchanged.

For Further Information Please Contact:

The Washington State Office
of Minority and Women's Business Enterprise
Sam Wagner
OMWBE Program Specialist
(360) 701-1193
swagner@omwbe.wa.gov
Website: www.omwbe.wa.gov/ldp

Diversity Health Summit

By Alan Vu, Executive Assistant



Four hundred health professionals, health advocates, and community leaders convened last September 30, 2005 for the first Diversity Health Summit to eliminate the disparity gap in health care for communities of color at the Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport. The state's ethnic commissions and health agencies joined with foundations, local non-profits, and Governor Christine Gregoire to sponsor the event.

In Washington State and nationally, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans live much shorter lives than Caucasians. People of color also suffer more than Caucasians from cancer, diabetes, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, stroke, hepatitis, tuberculosis, and other ailments. The Summit will explore ways to close this "health gap" for people of color, who comprise 18 percent of the state population.

The Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (CAPAA), was the lead agency for the Health Summit, in collaboration with the Commission on African American Affairs, The Commission on Hispanic American Affairs, the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, The State Department of Health, the Department of Social and Health Services, the State Board of Health, the Washington Health Foundation, and HumanLinks Foundation.

"The gift of this summit is intercultural networking. We are all part of the health system. It is incumbent upon us to close the disparity gap by working together" said Ellen Abellera, Executive Director of the Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs.

The organizers hope to use this opportunity to find ways on how we can all work together to lessen the gap in health disparities. One way is to set up 5 intercultural networks:

- Health outreach, education and prevention in communities of color.
- Racial diversity in the health care professions.
- Health care access, insurance, and availability in communities of color
- Behavioral and mental health disparities among communities of color
- Promote greater cultural competence in the health care community
- Intercultural workgroup steering committee.

If you are interested in participating, please contact the CAPAA Office or Alan Vu at 360-725-5667.



USDA Rural Development

By Jared M. Jonson, Intern

The US Department of Agriculture has been focused on the development of rural America as one its mission areas. The improvement of economic, viability and quality of life for rural communities is a top priority. These goals are being accomplished through a variety of grant and loan programs for business, housing, and infrastructure. Though many may associate the term "rural" with farming, a vast amount of rural communities exist outside of agriculture areas.

Business Cooperative Programs

The USDA cooperative business programs work through partnerships with community-based organizations and financial institutions to provide financial assistance, business planning and technical assistance to rural businesses. The USDA also conducts cooperative-related research, and produces information to promote public understanding of cooperatives.

Community Facilities Programs

The USDA has made significant contributions to rural communities by providing loans and grants for vital community facilities through its community programs. These loans and grants help rural communities remain economically viable allow rural businesses to offer jobs and services to area residents. In 2004, USDA Rural Development provided \$8.5 million for 22 community projects, from playgrounds to health clinics, to fire service equipment and other first response equipment.

Community Facilities Grant & Loan Programs

Similar to housing grant and loan programs, the community facilities programs provide direct, and guaranteed loans while also providing grants to rural communities of up to 20,000 in population.

Housing Programs

Housing programs consists of providing assistance to citizens living in rural areas who cannot afforded the purchase price and maintenance costs of their own individual homes. This program subsidizes monthly mortgage payments, limiting costs to no more than 30 percent of the adjusted monthly income of the applicant. In addition, the USDA Rural Development program also provides assistance for apartment living.

For further information please contact:

USDA Rural Development
State Office
1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW, Ste. B
Olympia, WA 98512-5715
Phone: (360) 704-7740
Fax: (360) 704-7742

Washington State University

By Alan Vu, Executive Assistant

The Incident

On the 25th of February, a report was made to the Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs about racial harassment incidents occurring on the campus of Washington State University. It was reported that three Asian Pacific American female students reported racial harassment occurrences at the WSU Multicultural Service Center on a regular basis during the spring 2005 semester and 1 incident during the winter 2004 semester. They claimed that four male Caucasian students have made comments to them such as: "I hate Asians" and "They take away jobs". It was also reported that they slanted their eyes, do minstrel dances, peeing and pressing their bodies and faces against the glass doors on the Multicultural Service Center when the female students were working there.

WSU Administration Response

The incidents were then reported to the university's office of student conduct. The WSU Student Conduct Board cleared the two accused students of any wrong doing. The Conduct Board stated it was unable to find sufficient evidence that the students' actions were intended as harassment despite its pervasive and persistent nature. The University's official statement is that the accused students engaged in mere "adolescent behavior."

Student Protest

The frustration of the multicultural student community over administrative response to the incident sparked massive student protest and created the Students for Equity and Diversity. This organization led over 200 Students in a demonstration on central campus, which then proceeded to gather in dramatic fashion outside the office of University President V. Lane Rawlins. There, the students presented a list of demands including the implementation and enforcement of a zero-tolerance policy regarding discrimination and harassment. Following the protest, all students involved met at a central campus location to discuss strategies for maintaining student unity while lobbying the university administration for appropriate action on the matter.

Community Involvement

The incident was first brought before the commission during the board meeting on February 26, 2005. Initially CAPAA and the Office of the Governor were the first entities outside of Pullman to

reach out to the victims and students at WSU. Their invaluable support further legitimized student concerns and demands for action. Following the Feb. 26 meeting, Director Ellen Abellera met with community based organization representatives from the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA), Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), Asian Pacific Islander Coalitions of King, Eastside and Pierce County, and the Korean Voters Alliance. A letter was written on behalf of this coalition in full support of the victims and demands sought by the Students for Equity and Diversity WSU. Executive Director Ellen Abellera and Executive Assistant Alan Vu by charge of the governor's office went to Pullman on a fact finding mission. They met with the victims and the school administration. At the same time, Marc Brenman, Director of the WA State Human Rights Commission contacted the Office of Equity and Diversity at WSU to offer assistance in addressing the situation as a neutral party. The HRC became involved following the expressed concerns of the broader civil rights community, private groups, and government entities. The HRC formed a task force consisting of Mr. Brenman, HRC Chair Reiko Callner, and CAPAA Commissioner Thi Huynh to further research the matter. On the 12th of July, the task force released a 102-page report. The report covered the series of events through its interviews of people involved in the case and went forward to make recommendations. The task force advised the university to implement a host of new procedures to deal with harassment complaints including more open disclosure of disputes and resolutions, independent investigations to all complaints and possibly looking at alternative methods of dispute resolution.

Future Outlook

The API community and Washington State University will continue to work to improve the student and faculty climate at the university. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the individuals below.

For Further Information Or To Express Concerns Over This Matter Contact the Following Individuals

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Commission On Asian Pacific American Affairs
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210 11th Ave SW RM 301
Olympia, WA 98504
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Marc Brenman
Executive Director
Washington State Human Rights Commission
711 S. Capitol Way, #402
Olympia, WA 98504-2490
Phone: (360) 753-6770
Email: mbrenman@hum.wa.gov
Website: www.hum.wa.gov

Mike Tate
Vice President
Office Of Equity and Diversity
Washington State University
PO Box 641013
Pullman, WA 99164-1013
Phone: (509) 335-8888
Email: mtate@wsu.edu
Website: www.diversity.wsu.edu

WASL – WASHINGTON ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Reframing the Debate

By Ellen M. Abellera, Executive Director

Washington State is one of many states experiencing steady increases in the number of recent immigrant students in the public K-12 school system. In 2008, all public school students will be required to pass the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) prior to receiving the diploma. 2008 is the first year that all Washington High School seniors will be required to meet the new graduation requirements. While we want our students to be held with high standards, let us face it, our English language learners (ELL) or limited English proficient (LEP) new immigrant students have a big challenge to hurdle. Do we have alternative assessments in place, a continuing Education mechanism, or a specially developed curriculum to help them? There is none!



Data from 2004 on the performance of ELL students on the 10th grade WASL show that only 4.6 percent of ELL students performed at the proficient level on the 10th grade reading, writing, and mathematics sections of the WASL, and who would have been eligible to earn the certificate of academic achievement (CAA) had this requirement been in place in 2004.

During legislation 2005, Representative Dave Upthegrove introduced House Bill 2037, which unfortunately did not pass out of the Appropriation Committee. This bill would have created age-appropriate options for students that reach college age but don't have the English language skills to pass the WASL. However, Rep. Upthegrove was able to get funding in the budget to do a study/review of strategies currently being employed by school districts and community colleges to serve this student population, and to develop recommendations for the state legislature to consider in the 2006 legislation. The study is to be conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, a non-partisan public policy research think-tank located in the Evergreen State College.

Here is the Immigrant Education Final Budget Proviso: "\$40,000 of the general fund-state appropriation for fiscal year 2006 and \$10,000 of the general fund- state appropriation for fiscal year 2007 are provided solely for the Washington State Institute for public policy to conduct an analysis of the availability, services, and effectiveness of programs in community and technical colleges that serve the educational needs of recent immigrant students who are not proficient in English and who are or have been enrolled in high school but have not met graduation requirements. The analysis shall include, but not limited to, the type of programs provided, the geographic availability of programs, the identification of best practices, how the programs are funded, and the effectiveness of the programs. The analysis shall also include recommendations for improving the programs to better meet the needs of recent immigrant students and for expanding the availability of programs statewide. A report shall be submitted to the fiscal and education committees of the legislature, the superintendent of public instruction, and the state board for community and technical colleges by December 1, 2006"

I truly believe that we must build a strong political support for legislation action in 2006 to make education reform work for all students. This will need massive public awareness strategies to bring this message to parents, legislators and all communities. A strong grass roots campaign and coalition building ought to get started to galvanize a call for action during legislative session 2006. Time is short; the time for action is now!

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CAPAA Calendar and Historical Events

Upcoming/Ongoing

Job training for medical front-office positions at Seattle Central Community College, 1701 Broadway, Seattle, begins Nov. 1 and lasts for 20 weeks. Free. Call 206-587-3854.

"Basics of Small Claims Court," an educational presentation and an opportunity to make an appointment with an attorney, at Chinese Information and Service Center's International Family Service Center, 900 S. Jackson St., Suite 111, Seattle, on Nov. 9 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Free. Call 206-398-4051.

"Minus Space," a conceptual installation by Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo on architectural space and land use, at Henry Art Gallery, 15th Avenue Northeast and Northeast 41st Street, Seattle, from Aug. 20 to Nov. 20. Free-\$8. Visit www.henryartgallery.org.

"illuminesSENCE," an exhibit of works by Kathy Manthei, an artist from Phuket, Thailand, at The Nature of Thai, 117 S. Main St., Suite C, Seattle, from Sept. 1 to Nov. 30. Opening reception on Sept. 1 from 6 to 9 p.m. Free. Call 206-779-8424.

"Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Seasons of Life and Land," a photography exhibit by Subhankar Banarjee, at the Burke Museum, 17th Avenue Northeast and Northeast 45th Street, Seattle, from June 23 to Dec. 31. Free-\$8. Visit www.washington.edu/burkemuseum.

"India Senior Lunch," Celebration of the Festival Navratri coordinated by Nirmal Jaidka & Asha Desai, at Redmond Senior Center, 8703 160 Ave NE, Redmond, WA 98052, October 10, 2005. Suggested donation of \$3 is you are 60 years old or older, under 60 is \$6. 425-556-2345.

"ACLF Graduation Dinner," at the Seattle Hilton, 1301 6th Ave, Seattle WA, November 10, 2005, 5:30pm to 8:30pm. Visit www.aclfnorthwest.org

"N*IGGER WETB*CK CH*NK," a show that blends theater, hip hop, stand-up comedy, slam poetry and real-life stories about race, at the Kirkland Performance Center, 350 Kirkland Ave., Kirkland, on Nov. 4 and Nov. 5 at 8 p.m. \$12-\$24. Visit www.kpcenter.org.

Washington Environmental Council honors Chris Marr, president of Foothills Auto Group and an Asian American, at Washington State Convention and Trade Center, 800 Convention Place, Seattle, Nov 4 from 6 to 10 p.m. \$85-\$125. Visit www.wecprotects.org.

"Bridging the Gap Breakfast," a celebration of diversity that honors distinguished alumni, community members and scholarship recipients, organized by the University of Washington Multicultural Alumni Partnership, at the UW Husky Union Building Ballroom, Seattle, from 8 to 10 a.m. \$30-\$40. Visit www.uwalum.com.

Feng shui lecture with Bobbie Izuo at Ming's Asian Gallery, 519 Sixth Ave. S., Seattle, at 10 a.m. Free. Call 206-748-7889.

"Orchestra From Planet X," a musical performance geared towards 5- to 12-year-olds, conducted by Mei-Ann Chen and performed by the Magic Circle Mime Company and the Seattle Symphony, at Benaroya Hall, 200 University St., Seattle, at 11 a.m. \$8. Call 206-215-4747.

Diwali Party, celebrating the Indian festival of lights, presented by the Northwest Asian Deaf Organization, at Abiruchi Indian Restaurant, 2241 148th Ave. N.E., Bellevue, from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$7-\$12. E-mail ddehmeri@aol.com.

Hmong New Year Celebration, with special recognition of Hmong veterans, at Seattle Center, 305 Harrison St., Seattle, from noon to 5:30 p.m. Free. Visit www.seattlecenter.com/events.

"My-T," an interactive T-shirt construction event, featuring artwork by Maki Tamura and others in cooperation with the New York Fashion Academy, at Thread Shop, 5000 20th Ave. N.W., Seattle, from 6 to 10 p.m. Free. Call 206-388-4616.

National Association of Asian American Professionals' Leadership Awards Gala, honoring Cheryl Chow, Dr. Kuen Y. Lin and scholarship recipients, at Washington Athletic Club, 1325 Sixth Ave., Seattle, at 6 p.m. \$55-\$75. Visit www.naapseattle.org.

Asian Counseling and Referral Service benefit auction, dinner and dance, at Meydenbauer Center, 11100 N.E. Sixth St., Bellevue, on Nov. 18 at 5:30 p.m. \$85. Visit www.acrs.org.

Peter Kwong, author of *Chinese America: A History in the Making*, reads from his new book at Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St., Seattle, on Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m. Free. Call 206-624-6600.

"A Tribute to the Late Frank Okada," with poetry by Lawson Fusao Inada and talks by Kazuko Nakane and Alan Lau, at the Central Library, 1000 Fourth Ave., Seattle, on Nov. 20 at 3 p.m. Free. Visit www.spl.org.

"30 Years After the Fall of Saigon," an exhibit that commemorates the journey and contributions of Vietnamese Americans, at Wing Luke Asian Museum, 407 Seventh Ave. S., Seattle, from Oct. 21 to Dec. 18. Free-\$4. Call 206-623-5124.

To submit upcoming events, please email avu@capaa.wa.gov



The CAPAA Newsletter is a publication by the Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs

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